



July 3, 2019

The Honorable Mikie Sherrill
1208 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Anthony Gonzalez
1023 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

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Dear Representatives Sherrill and Gonzalez,

On behalf of Research!America, the nation's largest not-for-profit advocacy and public education alliance committed to faster medical and public health progress, we thank you for introducing the "Securing American Science and Technology Act of 2019" (H.R. 3038). We appreciate your timely leadership on this critical issue and support your legislation.

Research!America is dedicated to ensuring that the U.S. not only maintains, but strengthens its strategically important global standing in research and innovation. Sustainable funding for research and development depends, in part, on the ability of industry, universities, research institutes, and federal labs to capitalize on their innovations—an ability that may be undercut by the theft of nascent intellectual property. Yet, research thrives in the U.S. because our nation is unparalleled in promoting the open exchange of ideas, attracting top-notch foreign talent, and fostering global collaboration. Our nation's unique research environment can and will persist in an era of increasing foreign interference, as long we as a nation refuse to cede these values and strengths.

The Securing American Science and Technology Act (SASTA) takes a reasoned approach to safeguarding federally funded research and development from such threats as foreign interference, cyber-attacks, theft, and espionage, without isolating our researchers from the free exchange of ideas that contributes so importantly to our nation's unparalleled R&D capacity and output. SASTA would first require the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy to create an interagency working group under the existing authority granted to the National Science and Technology Council. By improving coordination between federal science and security agencies, SASTA would facilitate the development of common definitions and reporting requirements, ensuring that all new and existing security regulations can operate to their full effect. Harmonizing guidelines and streamlining policies across multiple government entities will also uncover security risks that need to be addressed, as well as redundant policies.

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Additionally, we applaud the proposal to create a new National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine “National Science, Technology, and Security Roundtable.” The bill creates a framework for federal science, intelligence and security agencies to work together with academic and industry partners to effectively address national and economic security concerns. The roundtable will provide an opportunity to share best practices amongst stakeholders and will issue publicly-available reports, ensuring that the entire research community is better-equipped to identify and address potential threats.

Thank you for your bipartisan efforts to address these critical issues. Patients and their families are depending on the research of today to generate the cures of tomorrow, and this legislation will help ensure that the progress they hope for can be made possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Woolley".

Mary Woolley
President and CEO, Research!America

CC The Honorable James Langevin
The Honorable Elise Stefanik
The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson
The Honorable Frank Lucas